1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
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A wife inherited practically nothing from her husband. If she had been faithful to him and had been of a good disposition, her parents-in-law might give her a certain number of horses or other property. The tent was considered the woman's possession while she lived with her husband; but on his death, even this was no longer her property. If the tent was worth keeping at all, it generally went to the dead man's sister, if she was newly married. A man, on the contrary, inherited his wife's property, though he generally gave back part of it to her relatives.

A woman, on her husband's death, went back to live with her parents, or, if these were dead, with her brother, uncle, or other relative. An old woman, on the death of her husband, generally went to live with her children, most frequently with a daughter.

On the death of a brother, especially a beloved one, or of his father or his son, a man cut his hair and went out naked (with only a buffalo robe) on the prairie to cry from morning until late at night. Women, besides cutting their hair, and cutting themselves (especially on the leg) until they bled, would also go out to cry, naked from the waist up. A sister cut herself for a brother, but a mother mourning for a child underwent the most pain. Of course the mourning was greatest for an only child. In such a case, parents might give away everything in their tent and nearly all their horses, stripping themselves of property so thoroughly as almost to go naked. Some mourners fasted for a number of days. If, while a person was crying on the prairie, one should in joke attempt to scare him, he might kill the disturber. Mourners were the bravest people in war, caring about no danger whatever.

Burial was in trees, on high rocks, or in caves inaccessible to wolves and coyotes. The corpse was wrapped in a burial robe.

A menstruating woman was called niniitixtj. It is said that she did not retire to a separate lodge, or eat separately from her family; but she did not approach a sick patient, because of the evil effect she would have on his condition by her presence. Some women were said to wear a breech-cloth during their menstruation.

In childbirth, women either lay or knelt. They grasped a stick supported in a horizontal position by two upright forked sticks set in the ground. After the umbilical cord had been severed, the end was left on the child. It was thought to fall off on the fourth day. The woman who had cut the umbilical cord received as a gift the knife she had used. A woman who washed a new-born child was given the vessel in which it was washed. The afterbirth was hung in a tree. If it were left lying to be handled, the child would be afflicted with sores. For three or four days after birth, the child was given suck by other women than its mother. This statement apparently refers chiefly to a woman's first child.

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A plant called hăyaa"t[a] is used both as a perfume and as a medicine. Pieces of it tied by a string to the shoulder of the shirt give a pleasant smell. It is also laid in warm water without being boiled, and the water is then used as medicine for sore eyes (specimen Museum No. 50-1883). 278 757

In case of snow-blindness, charcoal is put around the eyes, and believed to be very efficacious.

The green stems of a plant containing a white juice are used for women who have no milk. The Arapaho use the same plant for a similar purpose, and call it "milk liquid."[1]

A root called băetset ("hand," on account of the peculiar conformation of the roots) is laid in very small quantity into cold water, which is drunk by women to insure easy child-birth (specimen Museum No. 50-1946). [844]

The flowers of a composita called niha"ăñnou ("yellow-head") or tjitjixtä"sibyiisöö are put on coals for a woman who has given birth. She stands above the fire to incense herself (specimen Museum No. 50-1944).

Another plant called niha"năñnou ("yellow-head"), which grows close to the water, is boiled, and drunk for pain in the back or in the body (specimen Museum No. 50-1945).

A root called niitason ("sharp") is pulverized, and then applied to sores in the mouth and on the tongue (specimen Museum No. 50-1838).

A rock lichen called benaatsθn is chewed for a sore mouth (specimen Museum No. 50-1874).

The root of tyätyaniçä is obtained from swampy land far to the north of the Gros Ventre habitat. The roots are soaked in water and the black portions removed. Then they are grated, mixed with water, and applied to the neck for sores (specimen Museum No. 50-1907).

A root called kouh'ya" is chewed until a sticky paste results, which is applied to sores (specimen Museum No. 50-1919).

A fungus called tsaadjina" is set on fire, and when glowing is applied to wounds or sores. It is also pulverized, and put on the gums of children when they are teething. It is said to grow on birch-trees, near the root (specimen Museum No. 50-1837). [752]

The roots of inäitsöö are boiled and the water used to wash the part of the body which has been burned by the application of the glowing fungus tsäadjina" (specimen Museum No. 50-1850). [752]

Hoyaa"tou-leaves, which are also used as incense, are boiled in water. This is then applied to the body to allay pain (specimen Museum No. 50-1790). This medicine is the Arapaho niiba"tou or iba"tou (fir or similar leaves), used both as incense[2] and as medicine.[3]

[1] See Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part IV, p. 438.
[2] Ibid., Vol. XVIII, Part I, p. 32.
[3] Ibid., Part IV, p. 420.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
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stance, it was the dark of the moon when a woman ceased menstruation, she kept track of the months by marking with charcoal on a piece of wood, or by notching a stick, each successive time the moon was in that phase and "she would usually estimate it right."

Childbirth usually took place right in the woman's own lodge. Should someone there be sick, he would be moved to another lodge if possible, for while it was considered bad for the sick person to be in the same lodge with a woman in her menses, it was much worse were the woman in labor, for the odor of the blood at delivery would affect the sick person adversely. In fact, a person who had only been near the place where a woman was being delivered was not allowed to come near a person who was ill. If the patient could not be moved, the woman in labor would go to another lodge, preferably to that of her grandmother or of her widowed aunt. She would avoid her own mother's lodge as her father or brothers might be around and she would be "ashamed" to go where they might be.

Although the attitude has somewhat changed now, in former times, according to Coming Daylight and Singer, a pregnant woman was supposed to be reticent regarding her condition right up to the last moment. She might suffer intensely, but "you would never know there was a thing wrong with her." Only when she seemed to be very close to term did they send for a midwife and for some old man or woman who would give her medicine. A male doctor did not touch a woman in labor, but would give her medicine to alleviate the pains. Mary told of her own experience. "There was a well-known doctor of this kind who died about ten years ago. He was blind and, when called on a case, would sit with a pot of medicine beside him. He attended me and when he heard me say I was in pain he would just touch me with the end of the stick and the cramps would go away. Finally I complained that I was tired. The midwife said that it would soon be over, but the old doctor told them: 'No. It hasn't turned yet.' I thought this was strange that he should know this as not only was he blind but he had not touched me. Later on he said: 'It will be about a half hour more.' And he was right."

Different practitioners have different methods. Singer witnessed the following case. "A man had received power from

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
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844 756 'someone' [a supernatural agent] to relieve women in labor. His wife was assisting a woman who was experiencing great difficulty. She went to her husband and said: 'What are you made of that you don't pity and help us?' He paid no attention at first but finally gave in to her pleas. He said: 'All right. I will pity you folks. You blow this powdered medicine root on the nape of that woman's neck. Then boil a bit of this other medicine and give it to her with this horn spoon. Make her drink from this very spoon.' The treatment was successful and the child was born very shortly thereafter."

[842] 844 Sometimes such doctors would predict the sex of the expected child, but a common saying was that a woman herself could tell because "a boy will lie in the womb with his knees up, whereas a girl will lie flat."

It was not necessary to have both a midwife and a doctor if the midwife herself knew medicines. For instance, Coming Daylight's grandmother had medicines for childbirth and always looked after women without calling in anyone else. After Coming Daylight had borne her first child, her grandmother taught her all these medicines so that she in turn could assist her female relatives. They had to pay each one who helped at childbirth. The doctor, or the midwife who administered medicines, would receive as much as a horse, while the others who assisted were paid by gifts of lengths of cloth, blankets, or other articles of that sort.

The woman assumed a kneeling position and grasped a crossbar. "They won't let you lie down unless you are so weak you can't help yourself."[4] If a woman were slow in childbirth, the midwife tried to manipulate the foetus in the right place in order to speed the delivery. She massaged the woman gently and talked to her, telling her: "Take it easy. Don't think that you are going to have a hard time. Think of pleasant things. Make it easier for yourself."

Most women were very quiet even when the pains were bad. They always said that if a woman cries out she drives the child back. Furthermore, they said that it is bad if a woman turns and twists in pain as the cord will get all tangled up around the child.

Anyone assisting at the birth could cut the umbilical cord.

[4] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 181.

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"They usually cut the cord long, say four to six inches, because they were afraid the infant would bleed to death if they cut it short. You kind of drain it and get it cleaned out and tie it once. Apply a powdered root and then put a band around the body. It usually takes four days before it drops off." Since the cord is part of the body and they wanted to keep it close to its owner, when the cord came off, they placed it in a small fancy bag filled with sweetgrass or tobacco and pinned the bag to the clothing right at the back of the neck. Singer said that she had heard that boys used to wear this little bag tied to the wrist rather than at the back of the neck as girls did. Good care was taken of the bag until adulthood. The bag was usually in the shape of a turtle, with a little head. Although Coming Daylight had made two such bags, she didn't know why they used this shape except that it had been done thus for generations.[6] Mary's grandmother, however, made a little container for Mary's own son and it was in the shape of a snake with a head. Mary added: "And the Gros Ventres don't like snakes either. But my grandmother made that one in the shape of a snake on account of a dream she had."

The afterbirth was disposed of just as soon as possible, preferably by having someone place it good and high in the branches of a tree.[6] The person who disposed of the afterbirth was not supposed to let anyone see him do so, although the informants did not know the reason for the secrecy. It is more customary at present to burn the afterbirth as the whites do, but Coming Daylight remarked that she had done that only once,—on the occasion when she was caught out in the open all alone and had to deliver herself.

A mother rested quite a while after her child was born because it was said that working would make her sweat and that would hurt her milk. The child of a woman who worked a great deal immediately after its birth would not grow up to be so healthy as the child of one who took it easy. In the opinion of Coming Daylight and of Singer a woman should sit up only after four days and get up and be walking around in about ten days. Coming Daylight her-

[6] For discussion of these navel amulets and illustrations thereof, see Kroeber, 1908, pp. 166–67, and plate IX.

[6] "If it were left lying to be handled, the child would be afflicted with sores." Kroeber, 1908, p. 181.